

## Hobbies

# U.S. won't withdraw big bills to fight drugs

By Roger Boye

A new Treasury study rejects suggestions that Uncle Sam withdraw large-denomination bills to help police fight the war on drugs.

Such a withdrawal would inconvenience consumers, impair legitimate business transactions, and force the government to spend more money in printing additional low-denomination bills. Also, a withdrawal would make little sense because drug traders use more \$10 and \$20 Federal Reserve notes than the \$50 and \$100 denominations, according to the study that was mandated by Congress.

Meanwhile, officials at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing are testing samples of paper money that have microprinting around the center portraits and a clear polyester thread embedded into the paper.

The new anti-counterfeiting devices—under discussion for several years—are expected to make “greenbacks” more difficult to

duplicate accurately on color copying machines. If the tests are successful, the new paper money could enter circulation in the early 1990s.



Did you know you could gain “solid financial protection” by investing in certain types of silver dollars at \$38 a coin? Sound like a great deal? Hardly, say the experts, who warn that some mail-order companies offer old coins at inflated prices, especially during the holiday gift-giving season.

Buying old coins “can be very rewarding, but it can also be a risky business for anyone who is not aware of the pitfalls,” writes Kenneth Bressett in his Consumer Alert column in *The Numismatist*. “Beginners would be well advised to study the market carefully before committing the ‘family farm.’”

For example, silver dollars of the type offered at \$38 each in the promotion described by Bressett sell for less than half that amount at most coin stores.

Would-be buyers should know

that coins must be held for long-term appreciation and that there is “substantial dealer profit attached to both buying and selling coins,” Bressett said.



U. S. Mint officials have issued bronze medals honoring composer Aaron Copland, whose works include “Appalachian Spring” and other famous scores.

Each medal is inscribed “a leading spirit in the development of American music” and duplicates a Congressional gold medal authorized by federal legislation. The “heads side” design features a portrait of Copland prepared from photographs, and the “tails side” depicts the hands of a conductor holding a baton.

By mail a 1½-inch medal costs \$2.25 and a three-inch medal, \$21. To order, send a check payable to the United States Mint to the mint's Order Processing Branch, 10001 Aerospace Drive, Lanham, Md. 20706. Allow several weeks for delivery of the merchandise.